



Managing Your Vanpool Group

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Managing your vanpool group involves keeping good operational records and practicing effective group coordination and recruitment techniques.

Determining Vanpool Rider Fares

To avoid making a profit, the actual cost of owning and operating the van must be distributed between the mileage used for commuting and mileage used for other purposes. With a new vanpool, you will want to estimate and adjust this ratio quarterly. A general rule to start with is that 75 percent of van use is commuting and 25 percent is personal use. Remember, only costs attributable to actual commute mileage can be reimbursed to you via the fares.

Initially, you may want to base fares on current statistics which estimate per mile costs of ownership and operation. Your local transit agency may be able to assist you, or you

can contact your local AAA office for the current costs. AAA also offers an annual report entitled Your Driving Costs for a minimal price.

During the course of the first year of operation, you will determine your actual costs. When these are determined, adjust fares to ensure that reimbursement does not exceed costs for the year.

Specifically, what expenses are reimbursable? Quite simply, operating and capital commuting costs are reimbursable. Operating costs include gas, oil, tires and snow tires, servicing, cleaning, windshield wiper fluid, parking tolls, licenses, and insurance. Capital costs include lease or purchase payments and amenities you buy for the van (such as reflective triangle kit.) If your vehicle is already paid for, you may still include an amount in the fares to cover the vehicle's decreased value due to its use as a vanpool.

On the next page is a worksheet for calculating your vanpool fares. A calculation based upon using the van 75 percent for commuting has been done as an example. Estimated prices for a minivan, insurance, and operating costs were used. You will need to estimate your own costs at first and repeat your calculations once you are in operation, using the actual expenses and mileage to arrive at a more accurate figure.

Keeping good records of your expenses, mileage, and ridership on a monthly basis will help you to adjust your calculations. See pages 45 through 50 for a sample Vanpool Monthly Expense Record and other useful sample records.

It is the intent of this section to provide information and examples rather than formal tax advice. For detailed information consult a tax specialist, your nearest IRS office, and the applicable state laws in Appendix C.

Establishing Rules of the Road

Based on what has been most successful with public vanpool programs, we suggest a democratic approach for your vanpool group. You are providing a quick and direct commute for your riders and they are helping you pay for your van, so you all have much to gain from coordinating to provide smooth operation.

Initially, you may find it best to set down a few simple rules to ensure the comfort and convenience of everyone involved. Some of the items you may want to clarify up front include the route, schedule, pickup points, wait times, backup carpool arrangements, absences and notice requirements for them, substitute passengers, seating, heating, ventilation, lights, radio station, smoking, fares, fare adjustment, desired formality for internal rules, and whether or not you will require your riders to sign a contract to participate. The group can then review their rules periodically for changes.

Vanpool Fare Calculation Worksheet

A. Monthly fixed cost of a purchased vehicle

	Example	Your Figures
1. Cost of vehicle	\$ 20,000	_____
plus finance charge (7.5%)	+ 4,049	_____
	= 24,049	_____
Less Salvage Value (40%)	- 8,000	_____
Total	\$ 16,049	_____
	or \$267/month	_____
<i>After 5 years</i>		
2. Other Annual Expenses	\$ 30	_____
License	+ 1,000	_____
Insurance		_____
	\$ 1,030	_____
Total	or \$86/month	_____
3. Monthly Fixed Cost (Items 1+2)	\$ 353	_____

B. Per mile operating costs:**

	Cost per mile	
1. Gasoline and oil	6.0 cents	_____
2. Maintenance	+ 2.6 cents	_____
3. Tires	+ 1.0 cents	_____
Total	= 9.6 cents	_____

C. Calculating monthly fares

1. Daily round trip distance	= 50 miles	_____
2. Multiply by the average number of workdays per month x 21	= 1,050 miles	_____
3. Multiply by per mile operating cost ("B" total from example is .096)	1 05/months	_____
4. Add 75% (commuter portion) of vans monthly fixed costs "A" total from above. "A" = \$353 x .75 = \$264.75 = \$105	\$369.75/month	_____
5. Divide the cost by number of passengers (7 for minivan)	= \$52.82/month	_____

* Estimated from US Bank and Northwest Region Employees Credit Union

** Estimated from AAA's "Your Driving Costs," 1994

Some sample rules:

- Smoking will/will not be allowed.
- Seating will be on a first-come, first-seated basis.
- Maximum waiting time at each pick-up point is _____ minutes.
- The driver must be notified by phone, a day ahead of time if possible, about absences.
- The fare per rider is \$ _____ per month and is to be paid in full before the first day of the month.
- Rebate of fares will not be allowed unless the rider terminates participation with two weeks' notice or finds a rider replacement in the vanpool.
- The radio will/will not be played. If the radio is played, it will be set on _____ station by majority vote.
- Pick-up points and times in commute order are:

- Drop-off points and times in

reverse commute order are:

- Rules may be changed by majority vote.
- Rules will be re-evaluated by the group every _____ months.

Tips For Effective Vanpool Management

Many of the following tips for effective vanpool management are supported by sample vanpool record-keeping formats, located on pages 45 through 50 at the end of this chapter. These resources are based on what has worked for various public vanpool programs. We hope you will find both the tips and the samples useful in setting up your own vanpool group.

1. Set down basic operating rules, establish a route, plan a schedule and establish your fares before you go on the road. Then, periodically initiate a democratic review of operational rules by the group.

2. Keep good records of mileage, expenses, fare payments, and ridership.
3. Establish and maintain good communication with your group.
 - Keep a telephone tree for efficiently communicating schedule changes, illnesses, and emergencies.
 - Consider written rider and driver agreements for group members, as additional clarification of roles and responsibilities.
4. Establish emergency plans with your group.
 - Coordinate backup carpools in case the van is not available during an emergency. Appoint three or four people to be in charge of carpools. You call them in the event of an emergency, then they call the people on their lists (those who will ride in their carpool).
 - Establish an adverse weather emergency plan. For instance, allow more commute time during snow and ice.
 - Also, develop a plan in

case of accident or breakdown. Assign van members to specific jobs such as setting out emergency triangles and checking on other passengers.

5. Recruit sufficient backup drivers to cover illnesses and vacations. Rotate driving duties with backup drivers. This lessens the chance of driver fatigue and improves safety. Consider having you and your backup drivers attend vanpool driver training with your local public vanpool program, if possible, or call your local transit agency about good local driver safety classes.
6. Keep your insurance policy up to date. Be sure any additional backup drivers have insurance coverage.
7. Keep your van well maintained. Do daily, weekly, and monthly safety inspections. If you find a problem, attend to it immediately.

Even when your van is full, keep recruiting potential vanpoolers. When a rider drops out, bring someone on the van from your waiting list. Call your local public transit rideshare coordinator if you need help finding riders. Remember, sharing the ride will save all of you money.

There are a variety of ways to locate potential vanpool riders. Some of the most successful are:

- Word of mouth at your place of employment
- Your employer's newsletter
- A notice or map with your proposed route posted on a bulletin board at your place of employment or nearby employment sites
- A sign on your van or car stating your origin and destination, that you are forming a vanpool, and a phone number to call

- A notice placed with local community newsletters or shopping centers
- Referrals from other vanpool operators who may have a waiting list of riders
- Call your local public transit agency or ridesharing coordinator (see Appendix A for a listing of statewide agencies)
- Register in your regional or local ridematch program (see Appendix A)

[illegible]

Sample: Vanpool Rider Roster

Start Date	Leave Date	Rider	Route/ Pickup Info
		Name: Address: Home #: Work#:	
		Name: Address: Home #: Work#:	
		Name: Address: Home #: Work#:	
		Name: Address: Home #: Work#:	
		Name: Address: Home #: Work#:	
		Name: Address: Home #: Work#:	
		Name: Address: Home #: Work#:	
		Name: Address: Home #: Work#:	

Sample: Vanpool Rider Six-Month Payment Record

Name	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
Total						

Sample: Vanpool Daily Log

Date	Begin Odom	End Odom	Commute Miles	Personal Miles	Driver & Trip Purpose
Total Miles					

Sample: Phone Tree

Tree	Work Phone	Home Phone
Driver:		
Rider:		
Driver:		
Rider:		
Driver:		
Rider:		
Driver:		
Rider:		
Driver:		
Rider:		
Driver:		
Rider:		
Driver:		
Rider:		
Driver:		
Rider:		

Sample: Rider Agreement

THE RIDER AGREES TO:

1. Pay his or her monthly fare in full on or before the first of the month for which it is being paid.
2. Abide by all rules established by a majority of the vanpool participants.
3. Notify the driver in advance of all anticipated absences from the van due to vacation/business travel, overtime, etc.
4. Notify the driver or nearest fellow rider of absence from the van due to illness.
5. Provide alternative transportation for himself/herself when the van is unavailable.

Rider Signature _____

Date _____

Driver Signature _____